PAM.
CHINA

The Mighty Power of God.

An Incident at Chinkiang.

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Mrs. J. W. Paxton.

"If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

We all agree that, "with God nothing is impossible," and that he is all merciful, and that he has promised to hear the prayers of his people.

The following incident is given to show how God brought deliverance to a poor, helpless woman, for whom there was no other way of salvation. This truly was a case where "man's extremity was God's opportunity."

Our station has been much blessed recently through a visit from Mrs. Arthur H. Smith of North China. She has proved a most helpful friend to us all and has given not only a great stimulus to our Chinese Christians, but has aroused every one of us missionaries, and shown to us the place of privilege and power, which we possess, all awaiting our claiming.

Toward the end of November on a very cold day Mrs. Smith and I went into the city of Chinkiang to see a woman who was insane.

When we entered the house we talked with the heathen father and mother and tried to explain to them the Story of Salvation through Jesus Christ, and, in talking and praying with them, asked them for a confession of their sins. After this we were taken in to see the poor woman; she was not in the house nor even within the enclosure of the wall but out in a lean-to where there was not even a door, and no protection from intrusion. As we went in we saw a miserable figure stooping down—her knees close to her shoulders, and we found out that this was her constant position; she never stood up and never lay down but was always in just this attitude. She tore all the clothing that was put on her, so she had, even in this cold weather, nothing but one garment on and that was very thin with a little cotton padding but very much torn, and she was constantly pulling cotton out of this. She had torn and pulled out her hair and it was all different lengths and never combed. A heavy chain

was around her neck. This chain was fastened to a wooden board which, in turn, was fastened to the ground. Her hands were padlocked, she began cursing and swearing in a dreadful manner as soon as we went in, and they said that she cursed all day and reviled everyone that came near her ; even at night the family would have to go out and beat her in order to get any sleep themselves. When she was fed she would break the chopsticks after she was finished and throw the bowl upon the ground so that at this time they were feeding her out of a face basin and she ate just as a dog eats ; they would hold it close to her face and she would eat out of it with her mouth and then as it was finished would lick out the basin with her tongue. She called for food ten or fifteen times during the day ; she would forget that she had been fed and would revile and make her family so miserable that they would have to feed her again. During the few hours that we were there she was fed four times.

She had been insane for about six months, during some of the time very violent. She was a young,

married woman, and had been mistreated, beaten, and cursed at her mother-in-law's home while her husband was away, and the insanity, the family felt, was connected with the birth of a child several months before.

When we prayed in this wretched little place the woman was quiet and seemed to go to sleep, but when we stopped she would begin to revile again. Mrs. Smith felt strongly that it was the devil who had gotten possession of her and this seemed to be borne out by the results. The lock on her wrists was first taken off and she seemed quite happy to have it away—showing her delight by grasping my hand; she could say nothing coherently, she could not even say one sentence, nor answer questions and she understood nothing. It was with great difficulty that the chain was taken away from her neck, her brother could not get it off; then Mrs. Smith began praying in English—"Lord, that man put the chain on and he can take it off, help him to take it off, let him get the tool which is to be used in taking it off!" The man left the room and in a short time came back with

a pair of foreign tweezers, a thing I have never seen in a Chinese house before, and with these the chain came off immediately. The family said they feared that if they let her loose she would run away and be so violent to the neighbors that she would be hurt in some way, but they were willing to unloose the chain. However, after this had been done, she could not walk, she could not stand up, nor take one step, she could not sit in a chair nor lie down, she had only the one position, and though they partially carried her into the family room, she could only crouch in this one position—with her knees against her shoulders.

She had been brought from her mother-in-law's home to her father's house several months before. Her father was a man who seemed so kindly and had done so much for her and seemed to love her greatly, though they were so very, very poor. We stayed until after ten that night and left with their promising not to fetter her again, and to fast and pray on Monday—three days away—and we promised to get some in the church to fast and pray too.

Monday was a cold, rainy day, and we could but wonder how many of the church members would be willing to come out and fast and pray that day. Twelve came out, and others, who were not able to come, including some of our missionaries, had fasted at home, and others were praying at home. We went there first and prayed, and her father came in and told us about her. She had not run away and she had not been violent, she was better, though not well. We also found out that the mother was a Buddhist vegetarian of twenty years accumulated merit, and that her mother in turn, had done the same for forty years. This woman was unwilling to break her vegetarian vows, even should it mean that her daughter would have to stay on in this miserable state in which she was. When we came again to the daughter, she recognised us and said that she had been thinking of us ever since we had left, and had been "lonesome to death" without us. She remembered the name of Jesus, and she felt as if she had been greatly helped. We prayed with her again long and earnestly and then went home.

The father left next day for Hupeh. The mother was not in sympathy with us. The brother said: "Pray for her? Why, she is only a thing, you cannot call her a person. I don't care whether she lives or dies." The Bible-woman did not want to go to their home again, so we did not go back.

But, in spite of these obstacles, the church and we ourselves, kept on praying, and God kept on working.

Every time that we would hear anything about her, it was always that she was getting better. Then we heard that she was able to wash clothes, and then, that she was able to sew, and then, that her mother beat her because she would not sew as much as she wished her to, and then, we heard that she was able to go out and walk around, and then we felt that it was time that she came and acknowledged who it was who had done these wonderful things for her. So the first week in January we went to the gate and told the mother that we felt that her daughter ought to come to church. The mother said that she was quite well, so promised to let her come. On the third Sunday in

January she came; she walked all this distance, over half a mile to the church, though she had not been able to even stand when we first saw her. She stayed throughout the long service of Sunday School and church. Her face, while much changed from what it was when we first saw it, yet was not all that could be desired and we still prayed for her. Since then, she has been coming regularly to church services on Sunday and once during the week. The first Sunday in February, she came alone. Her mind is perfectly clear, according to the testimony of every one who meets her. She is learning to pray and can tell the Bible stories which she has been taught.

And we, as we see this woman, with all her mental and spiritual faculties fully restored, are like those of old, who, at the foot of the Mt. of Transfiguration "were amazed at the mighty power of God."

Feb. 10th, 1916.